Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance are requested in view of the above amendments and the remarks below. Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserve the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Furthermore, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application.

Claims 8 and 12-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as allegedly directed to a system that does not include hardware. Applicants respectfully disagree. Claim 8 sets forth a "receiving server, **including at least one computer**."

Claims 1, 8, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Benson (U.S. Patent No. 5,819,272) in view of Strickler et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,122,630), hereafter "Strickler." Claims 5-7, 12-14, and 19-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Benson and Strickler in view of Benson. These rejections are defective because Benson and Strickler, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose each and every feature set forth in the claims as required by 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Independent claim 1 recites:

A method for preventing an unread activity from being bounced-back to an originating server during a replication operation, comprising:
storing an identification of an originating server of a replicated unread activity, the unread activity being associated with a read/unread status of an email, in an unread log of a receiving server;
during a subsequent replication process initiated by the receiving server, preventing replication of the unread activity back to the originating server;
during the subsequent replication process, replicating the unread activity to at least one other server not identified as the originating server;

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wherein storing an identification further comprises updating the unread log to include an unread entry corresponding to the replicated unread activity, and storing the identification of the originating server with the unread entry;

wherein preventing the replication of the unread activity back to the originating server further comprises examining the unread log to determine if any unread entries stored therein correspond to an unread activity received from the originating server and, during the subsequent replication process, not replicating any unread activity identified as being received from the originating server back to the originating server;

wherein the originating server has a name, and wherein the identification is a hash of the name of the originating server; and

wherein during the subsequent replication process, if another server has the same hash as the originating server, the receiving server replicates the unread activity to the other server and back to the originating server.

Benson and Strickler, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose, *inter alia*, "wherein during the subsequent replication process, if another server has the same hash as the originating server, the receiving server replicates the unread activity to the other server and back to the originating server."

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner appears to equate this feature, which was previously presented in cancelled dependent claim 6, with Benson's "replication conflict message." This is completely incorrect. As disclosed by Benson (see, e.g., column 5, line 39 - column 6, line 4), replication conflicts "occur when a message is changed on a plurality of servers at roughly the same time, between replications." As such, contrary to the assertions of the Examiner, Benson's replication conflict messages are not used to indicate whether a server has the same hashed name as an originating server. Further, Benson's replication conflict messages are not used to cause a receiving server to replicate an unread activity to another server **and** back to the originating server, **if the other server has the same hash as the originating server**, as claimed in the present invention.

Independent claims 8 and 15 are allowable for reasons similar to those set forth above with regard to independent claim 1.

With respect to the dependent claims, Applicants herein incorporate the arguments presented above with respect to the independent claims from which the claims depend. The dependent claims are believed to be allowable based on the above arguments, as well as for their own additional features.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that all pending claims are allowable.

If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/ John A. Merecki /

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